LASVIT / PRESS RELEASE

Václav Havel, Bořek Šípek and Three Vases of Friendship

A New York exhibition reveals a lesser-known story of friendship told through three glass objects.

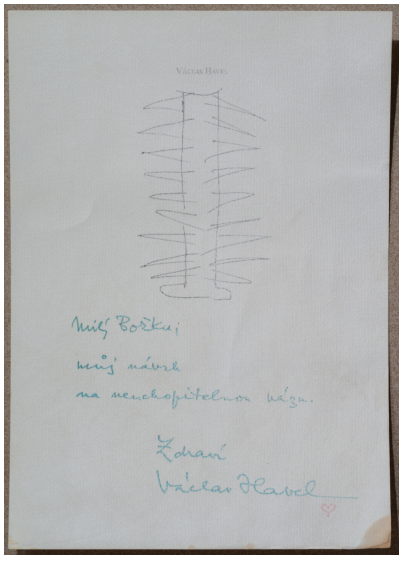
New York, October 2026 — On the occasion of the world premiere of Václav Havel's previously unperformed and unfinished play Warning, Lasvit presents a pop-up exhibition at its New York Atelier. Centered on The Elusive Vase, the exhibition revisits the friendship and creative relationship between Václav Havel and Czech designer Bořek Šípek, and the role of master glassmaker Ivan Kubela in bringing their ideas to life.

A friendship that found its way into glass



Václav Havel and Bořek Šípek, one of the most distinctive Czech designers of his generation and co-founder of Ajeto glassworks, now part of glass and design house Lasvit, were close friends and creative collaborators. During Havel's presidency, Šípek became the chief architect and designer of Prague Castle, where they worked together on the visual identity of representative interiors and objects.

For Šípek's 55th birthday, Havel drew a sketch for a vase. The resulting work, The Elusive Vase (Neuchopitelná), is difficult to comprehend and, quite literally, difficult to hold — a characteristically Havelian play on absurdity and double meaning. Šípek later returned the gesture. At the turn of the millennium, he created Millennium for Havel, a vase conceived around the passage between two erase.







The hands behind the glass

Master glassmaker Ivan Kubela worked alongside Šípek for nearly thirty years and continues to share his expertise at Lasvit's glassworks. Their partnership united the designer's ambitious ideas with the craft knowledge required to realize them in molten glass. Following Šípek's death, Kubela created a vase in memory of his longtime collaborator and friend. He named it Joy (Radost).

Together, the three vases trace a circle of gestures: from Havel to Šípek, from Šípek to Havel, and from Kubela back to Šípek. They reveal how glass can preserve personal relationships and creative exchange long after the moments that inspired them.

Ivan Kubela







1/ Václav Havel: The Elusive Vase (original: Neuchopitelná, could be also translated as The Ungraspable or The Untouchable Vase)
2/ Bořek Šípek for Havel: Millennium (Milénium)
3/ Ivan Kubela for Šípek: The Joy (Radost)

Exhibition information

Václav Havel: The Elusive Vase
September 28 – November 22, 2026
Lasvit Atelier, 51 Wooster Street, New York, NY 10013
Monday–Friday, 10 AM–6 PM

About Lasvit

Founded in 2007, Lasvit is a Czech glass and design house working with glassmakers, artists, architects and designers to create lighting, architectural installations and objects for spaces around the world.



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